

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please replace the Abstract, which is on page 90 of the specification, with the following amended Abstract.

Disclosed are methods and compositions that are related to the production of erythropoietin. The disclosed compositions generally comprise a poly amino acid, such as a poly amino acid comprising one or more glutamic acid residues. ~~The production of erythropoietin by use of the disclosed compositions and methods can take place *in vivo*, in which the proliferation of a subject's erythropoietin-producing cells leads to an increased level of production of erythropoietin, *in vitro*, in which increased proliferation of cultured erythropoietin-producing cells leads to an increased production of erythropoietin, *ex vivo*, in which cells or tissues harvested from a subject produce erythropoietin.~~ The disclosed compositions can be administered to a subject or applied to cells or tissues to stimulate increased production of erythropoietin. ~~The disclosed compositions and methods can be used, for example, to treat anemia, such as anemia associated with diseases and disorders such as chronic renal failure, end stage renal disease, malignancies, HIV infections and AIDS, rheumatoid arthritis, myeloma, and myeloplastic syndrome, and other diseases and disorders.~~

Please replace the two paragraphs at page 6, lines 1-15, with the following amended paragraphs.

Figure ~~[[21]]~~ **21a** shows that the cells are resident fibroblasts. Having excluded the possibility that the interstitial cells in poly-D-glutamic acid treated rats are not infiltrating blood cells, the possibility that these cells may be resident fibroblasts was examined. CD73 or 5'-nucleotidase is a surface marker protein specific for the resident fibroblasts in kidney. Using a specific antibody to CD73 surface antigen, it was confirmed that the proliferating interstitial cells in the poly-

D-glutamic acid treated rats are indeed resident fibroblasts. The saline treated rat kidneys also show the labeling for resident fibroblasts, which is expected. Positive labeling is identified as brownish color around the nuclei of the cells. ~~Panel C~~ **Figure 21b** is a negative control for Immunohistochemical staining, where primary antibody was omitted from the incubation.

Figure ~~[[22]]~~ **22a** shows two more profiles of CD73 positive interstitial cells in poly-D-glutamic acid treated rat kidneys. ~~Panel C~~ **Figure 22b** is a kidney section from a Poly-D-Glu treated rat, immunohistochemically labeled for EPO, using an EPO-specific antibody followed by peroxidase-labeled secondary antibody. All proliferating peritubular interstitial cells in Poly-D-Glu treated rats labeled with EPO antibody showing EPO production.